(b) The amount allocated from Central Road Fund for development of National Highways during the current financial year 2006-2007, is Rs. 6407.45 crore.

(c) The total amount allocated during the year 2006-2007 for development of National Highways in the State of Himachal Pradesh and the expenditure incurred thereon upto 28.02.2007 are Rs. 45.00 crore and Rs. 25.27 crore respectively. In addition to this Border Roads Organization (BRO) is developing and maintaining National Highway-22 (Wangtu-Pooh) under General Staff funds. The sanctioned scope on this Highway is Rs. 40.00 crore and the amount released during Financial Year 2006-2007 is Rs. 25.00 crore.

Widening and maintenance of NHs in H.P.

1146. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of National Highways in Himachal Pradesh on which work of widening, extension and maintenance has been started from the year 2006 till date alongwith the time by when similar work on other National Highways passing through Himachal Pradesh is likely to be started; and

(b) the estimated expenditure to be incurred and the amount actually spent thereon as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K. H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Works of widening, extension and maintenance have been started on National Highway Nos. 20, 21, 21A, 22, 70, 72 and 88 with effect from January, 2006. All the National Highways have been covered except NH-73A. The work of similar nature of this National Highway is likely to be taken up in subsequent annual plan.

(b) From January 2006, so far 25 works of widening, extension and maintenance have been started or sanctioned on National Highways in Himachal Pradesh with estimated cost of Rs. 57.81 crore against which the expenditure by State Government up to 31.1.2007 is Rs. 13.19 crore.

National Highways Authority of India has awarded four laning of Zirakpur-Parwanoo section of NH-22 with package cost as Rs. 295 crore on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis, about 6 km of which passes through Himachal Pradesh. No expenditure has been incurred thereon.

Nearly 11 km length of Pathankot (Punjab)-Bhogpur (Punjab) package of four laning on National Highway-1A passes through Himachal Pradesh. It is difficult to separate out expenditure on this package State-wise.

In addition to above, Border Roads Organisation is also incurring expenditure on maintenance of National Highway-22 from Wangtoo to Pooh from G. S. Funds as a continuing process.

Shortage of Indian officers for country's flag carriers

1147. SHRI T. T. V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any shortage of Indian officers for the country's flag carriers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is proposed to recruit foreign officers;

(d) if so, whether the proposal has met with stiff opposition from Trade Unions; and

(e) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) to (e) In view of the acute shortage of Indian officers, the Government is considering a proposal to allow foreign officers to work on Indian ships subject to certain conditions in consultation with the shipping industry.

Delay in NH Projects

1148. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that differences on key policy issues between Ministries from bidding norms to concession agreements and the delay in